

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry E. Mitchell today toured a local Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) summer camp and highlighted the economic and educational benefits of the America COMPETES Act.

"As a former teacher, I know how important it is to make science, technology, engineering and math education a priority," said Mitchell, a member of the House Science and Technology Committee. "It was great to see how, even during the summer months, our community is building excitement and interest in STEM education. Congress must keep doing what it can to strengthen STEM education and help ensure that our nation will remain competitive in an era of technological innovation."

The private STEM summer camp is organized by local science teacher Sherri Smith Dodgson. Dodgson raised the money herself to put on this camp, which focuses on getting kids involved in science and math at a young age. Mitchell was joined by Len Fine, on behalf of the Science Foundation Arizona STEM Initiative.

In May, Mitchell voted for, and the House passed, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, H.R. 5116, to make investments in science, innovation, and education. These investments would bolster U.S. scientific and economic leadership, support businesses and create jobs for American workers. Additionally, the bill would expand and strengthen STEM education programs at all levels of education, ultimately strengthening America's workforce and making America more competitive in the global market.

H.R. 5116 also includes legislative language sponsored by Mitchell to amend the Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, a program to train future STEM teachers, to reduce the cost-sharing requirement for participating colleges and universities during these tough economic times.

The legislation is now pending before the U.S. Senate.

Over 750 organizations have endorsed the legislation, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Roundtable, the Council on Competitiveness, the Association of American Universities, the Biotechnology Industry Organization, TechNet, American Council on Education and American Association for the Advancement of Science.

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